

## Message Text

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ACTION AF-10

INFO OCT-01 EUR-12 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 NSAE-00  
NSCE-00 SSO-00 USIE-00 INRE-00 AID-05 IGA-02  
AGRE-00 PM-05 H-01 INR-07 L-03 PA-01 PRS-01  
SP-02 SS-15 TRSE-00 OMB-01 IO-13 COME-00 /079 W  
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O R 081613Z NOV 77  
FM AMEMBASSY ACCRA  
TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 903  
INFO AMEMBASSY LONDON  
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LONDON FOR SIETZ

E.O.11652: N/A  
TAGS: EAID EAGR GH  
SUBJECT: AID PRESS RELEASE AND BROADCASTS ON FOOD AID DRAW GOG  
PROTEST

REF: USINFO WASHDC 042101Z NOV 77

1. SUMMARY. GOG HAS REACTED WITH QTE SURPRISE AND  
DISPLEASURE UNQTE TO THE AID NOVEMBER 4 PRESS RELEASE  
CONCERNING THE QTE SEQUESTERING UNQTE OF EMERGENCY FOOD  
AID TO GHANA. NEWS OF THIS PRESS RELEASE FIRST REACHED  
ALL CONCERNED HERE VIA EARLY MORNING BBAC AND VOA BROADCASTS  
NOVEMBER 5. REFTEL ARRIVED ONLY MID-MORNING, WELL  
AFTER BROADCASTS WERE HEARD. ECONOMIC PLANNING COM-  
MISSIONER GARDINER, BY NOVEMBER 7 LETTER TO AMBASSADOR,  
HAS PROPOSED THAT ALL QTE OUTSTANDING REQUESTS FOR US  
EMERGENCY FOOD AID SHOULD BE SUSPENDED UNQTE. WE  
WOULD LIKE TO RESPOND BY ASSURING GOG THAT WE WISH  
CONTINUE OUR CURRENT DISCUSSIONS CONCERNING THE TIMING  
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AND DIRECTION OF THE DISTRIBUTION OF THE 2,500 TONS  
OF SORGHUM NOW IN STORAGE IN KUMASI. IN EFFORT TO  
LIMITED DAMAGE TO US-GHANAIAN RELATIONS, AMBASSADOR AND  
USAID DIRECTOR OVER WEEKEND DISCUSSED PRESS RELEASE  
AND MISLEADING BROADCASTS WITH SMC SECRETARY BEECHAM  
AND COMMISSIONER GARDINER RESPECTIVELY. AMBASSADOR  
ALSO REVIEWED MATTER WITH COMMISSIONER OF FOREIGN

AFFAIRS FELLI EVENING NOVEMBER 7. PRIOR USAID CONSULTATION WITH MISSION HERE WOULD HAVE GREATLY EASED THIS TASK AND SOFTENED GOG REACTION. END SUMMARY.

2. SURPRISE ANNOUNCEMENT. THE US MISSION, OTHER FOREIGN REPRESENTATIVES AND THE PEOPLE OF GHANA AWAKENED SATURDAY, NOVEMBER 5 TO BBC'S RADIO ANNOUNCEMENT OF A DECISION BY AID ADMINISTRATOR GILLIGAN TO SUSPEND DISTRIBUTION OF FOOD AID TO DROUGHT VICTIMS IN NORTHERN GHANA. GOVERNOR GILLIGAN ALSO ORDERED THE SUSPENSION OF FUTURE SHIPMENTS OF EMERGENCY FOOD AID TO GHANA UNTIL THE GOG REASSESSED ITS PROGRAM AND REASSURED GREATER SECURITY MEASURES. BBC WENT ON TO STATE THAT THIS ACTION WAS TAKEN BECAUSE OF QTE THEFT AND CORRUPTION. UNQUOTE THE US MISSION WAS CAUGHT BY COMPLETE SURPRISE BY THE 0600 HOURS BBC BROADCAST. VOA ALSO CARRIED SIMILAR STORY ON ITS 0700 WEST AFRICA BROADCAST NOVEMBER 5. GOG OFFICIALS TELL US BBC REPEATED THE ITEM THAT EVENING AND AGAIN NOVEMBER 6 MORNING.

3. INITIAL GOG REACTION. DR. GARDINER TOLD USAID DIRECTOR THAT UPON HEARING THE BBC BROADCAST, HE WAS SHOCKED AND GREATLY DISTURBED THAT SUCH ANNOUNCEMENT HAD BEEN MADE, CATCHING THE GOG BY COMPLETE SURPRISE. THE ANNOUNCEMENT WAS MADE WITHOUT THE BENEFIT OF PRIOR CONSULTATION. LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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HIS ANGER WAS MORE PRONOUNCED BECAUSE HE STATED THAT QTE MY GOVERNMENT HAD ALREADY AGREED AT END OF SEPTEMBER TO THE RETENTION OF 2,500 METRIC TONS IN STORAGE PENDING THE REASSESSMENT OF THE NEEDS UP NORTH, IMPROVEMENT OF THE DISTRIBUTION NETWORK AND OTHER CORRECTIVE MEASURES. THE ANNOUNCEMENT WAS MADE AS THOUGH THE GOG HAD NOT PARTICIPATED IN SUCH DECISIONS ABOUT THE FOOD ASSISTANCE FROM THE U.S. UNQTE. DR. GARDINER FELT THAT NO USEFUL PURPOSE HAD BEEN SERVED BY SUCH A NEWS RELEASE. FOREIGN AFFAIRS COMMISSIONER FELLI'S REACTION TO AMBASSADOR PARALLELED DR. GARDINER'S.

4. OFFICIAL REACTION. FOLLOWING IS THE TEXT OF NOVEMBER 7 LETTER HAND-DELIVERED TO AMBASSADOR FROM DR. R.K. GARDINER, COMMISSIONER FOR ECONOMIC PLANNING. BEGIN TEXT. YOUR EXCELLENCY,

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INFO OCT-01 EUR-12 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 NSAE-00  
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THE GOVERNMENT OF GHANA WOULD WISH YOU TO CONVEY  
ITS SURPRISE AND DISPLEASURE AT THE PRESS RELEASE  
WHICH THE USAID ADMINISTRATOR CAUSED TO BE ISSUED ON  
4 TH NOVEMBER, 1977 ABOUT THE DISTRIBUTION OF EMERGENCY  
FOOD AID IN DROUGHT AFFECTED AREAS IN GHANA.

THE PRESS RELEASE GIVES THE GIST OF A LETTER  
ADDRESSED TO THE CHAIRMAN OF THE HOUSE SUB-COMMITTEE  
ON INTERNATIONAL DEVELOPMENT AND REFERS TO DISCUSSIONS  
WHICH AID OFFICERS HAD HAD WITH GHANAIAAN OFFICIALS.  
THE EXCHANGES MADE IT CLEAR THAT THE GOVERNMENT OF  
GHANA HAD INITIATED CORRECTIVE ACTION INDEPENDENTLY  
AND COOPERATED FULLY WITH USAID OFFICIALS IN INVESTI-  
GATING AND INSTITUTING REMEDIAL MEASURES, INCLUDING  
THE SUSPENSION OF DISTRIBUTION PENDING THE RE-OR-  
GANIZATION OF THE ADMINISTRATIVE MACHINERY FOR COPING  
WITH FOOD AID AND ITS IMPLICATIONS FOR THE CURRENT  
HARVEST. THE GOVERNMENT OF GHANA HAD NEVER AGREED  
TO THE SEQUESTERING OF ANY FOOD AID.

IN VIEW OF SUCH A JOINT EFFORT, THE LEAST THAT  
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GHANAIAAN OFFICIALS MIGHT HAVE EXPECTED, IN KEEPING  
WITH NORMAL PRACTICE BETWEEN SOVEREIGN STATES, WAS TO  
BE NOTIFIED OF ANY ACTION THE ADMINISTRATOR INTENDED  
TO ANNOUNCE RATHER THAN TO HEAR OF USAID DECISIONS

CONCERNING MATTERS OF MUTUAL INTEREST AS A NEWS ITEM  
IN A FOREIGN RADIO PROGRAMME.

THE GOVERNMENT OF GHANA HAS TAKEN DUE NOTE OF THE  
ADMINISTRATOR'S DECLARATION AND WOULD LIKE IT TO BE  
KNOWN THAT IF IT IS DECIDED TO REMOVE THE SO-CALLED  
"SEQUESTERED FOOD AID" FROM THIS COUNTRY NO OBJECTION  
OR DIFFICULTIES WILL BE RAISED. THE GOVERNMENT  
WISHES FURTHER TO PROPOSE THAT ALL OUTSTANDING REQUESTS  
FOR US EMERGENCY FOOD AID SHOULD BE SUSPENDED.

WE HAVE ALWAYS APPRECIATED THE CO-OPERATION  
WE HAVE HAD WITH US AGENCIES IN AN ATMOSPHERE OF  
MUTUAL RESPECT AND WE HOPE THAT THERE WILL BE OPPOR-  
TUNITIES FOR SUCH A RELATIONSHIP TO CONTINUE.

ACCEPT, SIR THE ASSURANCES OF MY HIGHEST CONSIDERA-  
TION. R.K.A. GARDINER, COMMISSIONER FOR ECONOMIC  
PLANNING. END TEXT. LETTER WAS COPIED TO THE  
SECRETARY OF THE SMC AND THE COMMISSIONERS FOR  
FOREIGN AFFAIRS AND FOR LABOR, SOCIAL WELFARE AND  
COOPERATIVES.

5. MISSION ACTIONS. IN EFFORT OVER WEEKEND TO LIMIT  
DAMAGE TO US-GHANAIAI RELATIONS, AMBASSADOR DISCUSSED  
ANNOUNCEMENT AND PRESS RELEASE WITH SUPREME MILITARY  
COUNCIL SECRETARY BEECHAM ON NOVEMBER 6 AND WITH  
COMMISSIONER FELLI ON NOVEMBER 7. USAID DIRECTOR  
TOOK UP MATTER WITH ECONOMIC PLANNING COMMISSIONER  
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GARDINER NOVEMBER 6; AND DCM AND ECON COUNSELOR MET  
NOVEMBER 7 WITH OTHER FOREIGN DIPLOMATS AND  
MINISTRY FOREIGN AFFAIRS SUPERVISING DIRECTOR FOR  
ECONOMIC RELATIONS, JOSEPH CLELAND. MISSION OFFICERS  
MADE THESE PRESENTATION ALONG FOLLOWING LINES:

A. PRESS RELEASE, ISSUED WITHOUT ADVANCE NOTICE  
TO US, HAD CONVEYED, PARTICULARLY AS PRESENTED BY BBC  
AND VOA, THE IMPRESSION, AMONG OTHERS, THAT THE LATE  
SEPTEMBER JOINT GOG-USG DECISION TO HOLD FINAL 2,500  
TONS OF TITLE II SORGHUM IN KUMASI, HAD JUST BEEN  
TAKEN UNILATERALLY BY USG. (SOME LISTNERS, INCLUDING  
SOME FOREIGN DIPLOMATS, MISUNDERSTOOD THE ANNOUNCEMENT  
AND THOUGHT THAT ALL FOREIGN ASSISTANCE FROM US TO  
GHANA HAD BEEN SUSPENDED.) THE BBC BROADCAST, AS  
HEARD HERE, WAS RATHER MORE MISLEADING THAN THE VOA.

B. WE RECOGNIZED JOINT NATURE OF DECISION AND  
PROGRESS MADE BY GOG THROUGH CONSULTATION WITH MIS-

SION TOWARD CORRECTING SOME ABUSES, FIRST AT PORT  
OF TAKORADI, THEN IN TRANSPORT OF FOOD UP-COUNTRY.

C. RELEASE NEVERTHELESS REFLECTED POLITICAL  
REALITIES IN US WHERE ADVERSE PUBLICITY HAD LED TO  
CONGRESSIONAL AND PUBLIC CONCERN OVER SERIOUS  
DIVERSIONS OF EMERGENCY FOOD AID -- AS WE HAD EARLIER,  
AND REPEATEDLY, WARNED GOG OFFICIALS IT WOULD. WITH-  
OUT FURTHER PROGRESS ON PART OF GOG TO CORRECT DISTRI-  
BUTION PROCEDURES AND CONTROLS, US FOOD AID WOULD  
REMAIN IN SERIOUS JEOPARDY.

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6. GHANAIAN PRESS SILENT. MONDAY NEWSPAPERS (THERE  
IS NO SUNDAY EDITION) DID NOT CARRY ANY COVERAGE  
ABOUT THE BBC AND VOA ANNOUNCEMENTS. AS YET, THERE  
HAS NOT BEEN ANY CONFIRMED NEWS COVERAGE ON THE  
GHANA RADIO ABOUT THE BROADCASTS. REPORTEDLY  
NORTHERN REGIONAL COMMISSIONER OVER GHANAIAI RADIOS STATION  
ACCUSED US OF QTE SLANDERING UNQTE GOG AFTER HEARING BBC  
BROADCAST. TO AVOID DRAWING FURTHER ATTENTION TO BROADCAST THE US  
MISSION HERE HAS NOT AISSUED ANY  
NEWS RELEASE NOR SOUGHT OUT REPORTERS TO CLARIFY  
THE EFFORS IN THE BBC BROADCAST.

7. COMMENTS: (A) GARDINER LETTER. THE STATEMENT  
THAT THE GOG QTE NEVER AGREED TO THE SEQUESTERING  
OF ANY FOOD AID UNQTE IS ACCURATE IF ONE USES THE

LEGAL DEFINITION OF SEQUESTERING, I.E. QTE TO TAKE  
POSSESSION OF (PROPERTY) AS SECURITY FOR A DEBT  
UNQTE. WE ASSUME IT WAS USED IN THE PRESS RELEASE  
IN THE SENSE OF QTE SET ASIDE UNQTE. THE GOG DID,  
IN FACT, AGREE TO SET ASIDE THE FINAL 2,500 TONS  
IN KUMASI AND HOLD UP DISTRIBUTION. CONCERNING THE  
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PROPOSAL THAT ALL OUTSTANDING REQUESTS FOR DMERGENCY  
FOOD AID BE SUSPENDED, WD ARENOT AWARE OF ANY  
SUCH REQUESTS OUTSTANDING AT PRESENT, ALTHOUGHT THE  
GOG RENEWED HERE ORALLY LAST MONTH ITS EARLIER  
REQUEST FOR ATITLE I PROGRAM.

(B) EFFECT ON U.S. GHANAIAI RELATIONS. THE  
RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN THE PROUD AND SENSITIVE GHANAIAI  
PEOPLE AND THE US IS EXTREMELY GOOD AND SO HAS BEEN  
THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN THE TWO GOVERNMENTS. VOA  
AND BBC BROADCASTS ARE WIDELY LISTENED TO IN GHANA  
WHERE VIRUTALLY EVERY EDUCATIONED PERSON UNDERSTANDS  
ENGLISH. THE IMPRESSION THAT THE US IS SUSPENDING  
FOOD AID WILL NATURALLY LEAD MANY TO WONDER IF POLITICAL  
NOTIVATION PLAYED A PART IN THIS PERCEIVED DECISION.  
THIS PERCEPTION IN TURN IS OF CONCERN TO GOG LEADERS,  
PARTICULARLY IN THE PRESENT PRE-ELECTION ATMOSPHERE  
AS THE MARCH 1978 REFERENDUM APPROACHES. SUCH DOUBTS  
ABOUT US MOTIVATIONS WILL NOT EASILY OR QUICKLY BE  
REMOVED.

(C) PRIOR NOTICE. WE AGREE WITH PARA 3 OF  
THE GARDINER LETTER QUOTED ABOVE. IN THE FUTURE IT  
WOULD BE TO THE ADVANTAGE OF THE US REPRESENTATIVES  
IN THE FIELD TO BE CONSULTED ABOUT SUCH MATTERS, EVEN  
POSSIBLY PROVIDING INPUT, WHERE NECESSARY, BEFORE SUCH  
ANNOUNCEMENTS ARE MADE, IF WE ARE TO AVOID FURTHER  
DAMAGE TO OUR RELATIONS WITH GHANA (AND POSSIBLY AD-  
VERSE EFFECTS ON OUR RELATIONS WITH OTHER AFRICAN  
COUNTRIES).

8. RECOMMENDED RESPONSE TO GARDINER LETTER. WE  
RECOMMEND A RESPONSE TO GARDINER LETTER FROM THE  
AMBASSADOR WHICH WOULD INCORPORATE FOLLOWING POINTS:  
WE REGRET THE ABRUPT AND MISLEADING MANNER IN WHICH  
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THE NEWS OF ADMINISTRATOR GILLIGAN'S LETTER TO CON-  
GRESSMAN HARRINGTON WAS BROADCAST IN GHANA AND  
PARTICULARLY THE INACCURACIES THOSE BROADCASTS CON-

TAINED. THE PRESS RELEASE HAD USED THE WORD QTE  
SEQUESTER UNQTE IN ITS COMMONLY USED MEANING OF QTE  
TAKE POSSESSION QTE. THE USG HAS NEVER PROPOSED  
REMOVING ANY FOOD AID FROM GHANA. THE DISTRIBUTION  
OF US EMERGENCY FOOD AID IN THE UPPER AND NORTHERN  
REGIONS IS CONTINUNING AS JOINTLY AGREED. WE WILL CN-  
TINUE TO CONSULT CLOSELY WITH THE GOG ON THE DIS-  
POSITION OF THE 2,500 TONS OF SORGHUM NOW IN STORAGE  
IN KAMASI. WE AWAIT THE GOG'S ASESSMENT OF ITS  
DISTRIBUTION PROGRAM. INCLUDING THE HARVEST RESULTS,  
THE U2B OF OTHER DONORS' FOOD AID, THE IDENTIFICATION  
OF FOOD-SHORT AREAS, AND THE TIMING AND PROCEDURES OF  
THE PROPOSED DISTRUBUTION OF US FOOD AID  
TO THE NEEDIEST RECIPTIENTS IN THOSE AREAS. WE, TOO,  
APPRECIATE DR. GARDINER'S PAST AND PRESENT COOPERA-  
TION AND ASSURE HIM OF OUR DESIRE TO CONTINUE TO WORK  
CLOSELY WITH HIM IN AN ATMOSPHERE OF MUTUAL RESPECT.

9. PLEASE ADVISE.  
SMITH

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## Message Attributes

**Automatic Decaptioning:** X  
**Capture Date:** 01-Jan-1994 12:00:00 am  
**Channel Indicators:** n/a  
**Current Classification:** UNCLASSIFIED  
**Concepts:** PRESS RELEASES, FOOD ASSISTANCE, NEWS MEDIA COMMENTS, GOVERNMENT REACTIONS  
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**Copy:** SINGLE  
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**Decaption Date:** 01-Jan-1960 12:00:00 am  
**Decaption Note:**  
**Disposition Action:** RELEASED  
**Disposition Approved on Date:**  
**Disposition Case Number:** n/a  
**Disposition Comment:** 25 YEAR REVIEW  
**Disposition Date:** 22 May 2009  
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**Film Number:** D770412-0564  
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**From:** ACCRA  
**Handling Restrictions:** n/a  
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**Line Count:** 352  
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**Litigation History:**  
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**Message ID:** c842d51f-c288-dd11-92da-001cc4696bcc  
**Office:** ACTION AF  
**Original Classification:** LIMITED OFFICIAL USE  
**Original Handling Restrictions:** n/a  
**Original Previous Classification:** n/a  
**Original Previous Handling Restrictions:** n/a  
**Page Count:** 7  
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**Previous Handling Restrictions:** n/a  
**Reference:** n/a  
**Retention:** 0  
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**Review Exemptions:** n/a  
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**Review Release Event:** n/a  
**Review Transfer Date:**  
**Review Withdrawn Fields:** n/a  
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**Secure:** OPEN  
**Status:** NATIVE  
**Subject:** AID PRESS RELEASE AND BROADCASTS ON FOOD AID DRAW GOG PROTEST  
**TAGS:** EAID, EAGR, GH  
**To:** STATE  
**Type:** TE  
**vdkgvwkey:** odbc://SAS/SAS.dbo.SAS\_Docs/c842d51f-c288-dd11-92da-001cc4696bcc  
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